



# City of Amesbury Lakes and Waterways Commission

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By City Clerk at 1:33 pm, 11/18/21

## Meeting Minutes for September 16, 2021 7:00 PM

**Location:** Virtual Zoom Meeting

**Attendees:** Tom Murphy-Acting Chair, Meghan O'Neill, Bernadette Lucas, Tom Volper, Art O'Dea, Cindy Roberts, Matt Chapin.

**Completing Minutes:** Meghan O'Neill, Secretary

### **I. Administrative Business**

#### ***A. Call to Order***

- This meeting is being conducted under the Act Extending Certain COVID-19 Measures Adopted During the State of Emergency, signed into law on June 16, 2021, by Governor Baker. Public access to participate has been made available.
- Tom called meeting to order at 7:03 PM.

#### ***B. Review of Past Minutes (August)***

- Cindy motions to approve minutes from August, asked for some numbering edits which Art will make. Meghan seconded approval.
- July meeting minutes were approved at last month's meeting in August
- Meghan will send both July & August approved minutes to city clerk for posting on website.

### **II. Engineer's update**

#### ***A. Engineer's Report***

- Pete Manor sent Tom M. an email with update because he was unable to attend meeting.
- Tom M. read email to group: water levels are above normal pool at this time, there are no flooding concerns and drawdown starts September 22<sup>nd</sup> for both Attitash and Meadowbrook; signs have been posted in the area notifying residents.

### **III. Harbormaster Update**

No updates for harbormaster position. Tom M. to reach out to Craig Bailey, Chief of Amesbury Police for an update.

### **IV. Current Business**

#### ***A. Membership***

- Lakes & Waterways does not have a member from Con Com currently, Tom will reach out to John Lopez to inquire about someone joining.
- Discussion about filling current vacancy on L&W. The group discussed moving forward but changing this position to an associate member and promoting the most tenured member to full status. The group is in agreement with this.
- Art & Kate not listed on website as member. Meghan to reach out and have them both added.

## **B. Waterbody Assessment**

### **i. Status of Web Ready Version**

- Meghan has not had a chance to work on this. Will work with Cindy and hopefully complete prior to next meeting.

### **ii. Review & Discuss Waterbody Assessment Matrix**

- Discussion about objective for the matrix document. Tom M. believes the matrix will help support the recommendation that someone be hired to manage Amesbury's waterbodies.
- Need to document "unknown" to see where gaps exist in the data.
- Information in the matrix will point to reoccurring issues in each waterbody that are dealt with independently versus having a systemic management plan. This should help support the financial viability of consistent maintenance and oversight.
- Discussion about understanding the purpose of each waterbody and overall usage (recreation, fishing, runoff, drinking water, etc.). Cindy asked about adding an impact statement or conclusive statement for each waterbody.
- Discussion about aquatic plant details, much of this information is not know because waterbodies have not been surveyed. How do we approach this as a committee? What resources would be needed and the overall costs for each location? Cindy added that it costs about 1500-2000 for a survey based on her experience with Lake Attitash.
- Next step of process: make sure 'USE' category is robust, as well as the population surrounding the area. Important to include aesthetics, wildlife habitat, if swimming is allowed/recommended or not to capture impact of waterbody in Amesbury.
- Quick discussion about posting signs when swimming not allowed/recommended. Many waterbodies have been swimming spots historically but due to plant growth, bacteria and overall appearance are no longer considered safe. Group agrees there should be posted signs to ensure safety for people and dogs. This is something the matrix can highlight as a commonality and need for multiple waterbodies.

### **iii. Cyanobacteria Testing**

- Cindy spoke about cyanobacteria bloom localized in front of a few homes on Lake Attitash. There needs to be more awareness as she did see dogs drinking the water. Cindy has communicated with department of health and DPW about this. It can be short lived, but it is dangerous.
- Discussion about education to residents about cyanobacteria. Could Amesbury push out a robocall, post info to website, post signs? What can be done to improve awareness?

## **C. CEI PowerPoint (Cindy)**

- Cindy shared slides from the Lake Attitash Association presentation. This information is for homeowners and includes laws, regulations and basic guidelines for yardwork, construction and other key activities occurring around the water.
- Cindy will get approval to post this on the L&W website page. Her and Matt will work on adding some additional information to make the document more comprehensive for Amesbury.
- The group discussed their experience in other states with homeowners guides around waterbodies, especially lakes. Con Comm has always expressed an interest so we could possible work together to create a guide for Amesbury residents to bolster awareness.

## **D. Lake Gardner Update**

- a. Conservation Committee meeting postponed until October so no updates on replenishment at this time.

**V. Additional Discussion**

- Cindy led discussion about her work to mitigate fertilizer usage in Lake Attitash watershed area in Amesbury & Merrimac.

**VI. Meeting Adjourned**

Tom M. motioned to adjourn- Art seconded at 8:29 PM. Next meeting October 21<sup>st</sup> will be conducted remotely.

**Next meeting: October 21<sup>st</sup>, 2021- Remote**